

April 29, 2022

ELGIN insight



EARTH MONTH ROUNDUP



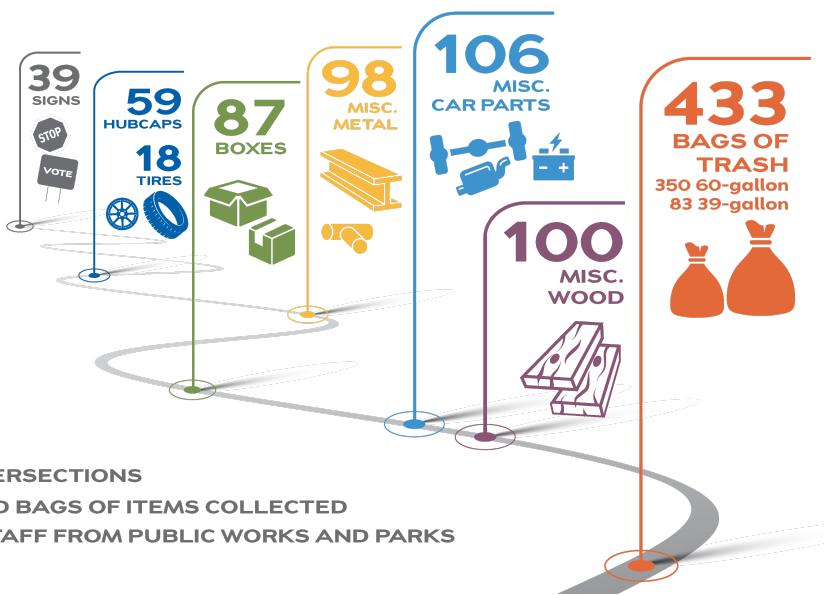
2022 Right of Way CLEANUP

8 DAYS

39 STREETS AND INTERSECTIONS

OVER 1000 ITEMS AND BAGS OF ITEMS COLLECTED

ELGIN ALLIES AND STAFF FROM PUBLIC WORKS AND PARKS



Cross-departmental team beautifies Elgin

When the snow melts each spring, it can be quite unpleasant to see all the trash and debris littered along busy streets. Lucky for Elgin, the "Right of Way (ROW) Cleanup" initiative is an annual tradition that helps tackle this problem early and effectively.

The ROW Cleanup is no small feat. It's a concentrated effort that takes place across the city with a team made up of staff from various public works and parks divisions working alongside Elgin Allies (volunteers and community service workers).

Interim Streets Crew Leader Ed Schmidt from Public Works and Community Resource Coordinator Fred Wimms from Parks and Recreation helped organize and oversee the operation this year. Ed determined how many people and what equipment could be made available each day so Fred had the

resources needed to complete cleanups of the areas he scheduled for each day. Fred developed daily plans and teams to target different areas, ensuring all were addressed and on schedule.

This year, the team worked in 39 separate locations—18 on the east side and 21 on the west side. They collected over 400 bags of debris in addition to numerous bulky waste items.

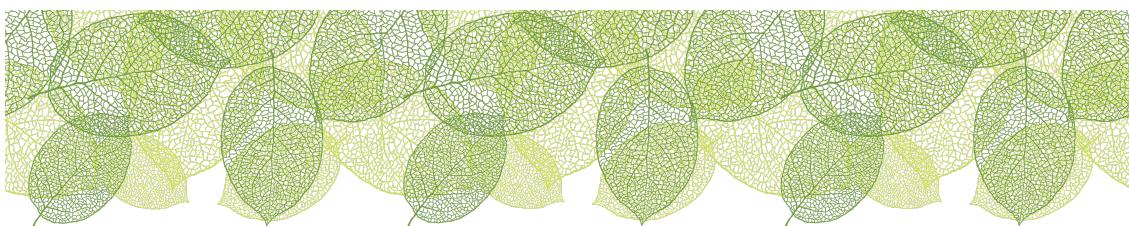
"We clean up most of the major streets throughout town, anything that's really in the public eye is the focus of the efforts," said Ed. "Anything people have to pay to get rid of, we find on the side of the road—tires and TVs are common items. I'm always amazed just how much garbage gets collected."

While the Elgin Allies are regularly tapped to handle service requests involving dumping, the ROW cleanup is the only concentrated, all-hands-on-deck initiative each year. In addition to making a big impact in a short period of time, the ROW cleanup is always a great opportunity for those involved to work with staff they don't see daily.

"It's nice to be part of this initiative," said Ed. "It's different from our day-to-day duties, and when the weather's nice, you can get out and walk a few miles."



ED SCHMIDT
INTERIM STREETS
CREW LEADER



Citywide sustainability initiatives underway

It comes as no shock that April (Earth Month) has kept Sustainability Analyst Mikala Larson busy with an array of planet-friendly projects and events.

Since she joined the City in July 2021, she has assisted with several Sustainability Commission initiatives. One such initiative that began last year has reached an exciting milestone just this month. Staff has selected a vendor

to bring forward for city council consideration to conduct Elgin's first ever greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory.

This GHG inventory will provide baseline data for the city and detailed reports on emissions per sector, both municipal operations and community-wide emissions. During the initial inventory, staff from various departments will be trained on how to collect and record the proper data for future years' updates, expected every two to four years.

"The GHG inventory will open up a lot of doors, providing concrete information of where we are at and where we can go, plus we will be able to compare Elgin to other entities," said Mikala. "We will identify science-based emissions targets to help us prioritize actions, so we can put time and resources into initiatives that will make meaningful change to our carbon footprint."

And one way to reduce our carbon footprint is through investments in renewable energy...like solar! And Mikala recently helped launch a community solar program to make solar subscriptions accessible to Elgin's residents and small businesses. Program postcards hit Elgin mailboxes earlier this month.

"Program subscribers are guaranteed to save money on their electricity bill, and they are supporting the solar industry development in Illinois," said Mikala. "So if you are reading this and wishing you could save money on your energy bill, you can. Head over to cityofelgin.org/communitysolar and subscribe today!"

And one more fun fact: Today, April 29 is the 150th anniversary of Arbor Day—an annual holiday to recognize the importance of trees.

"I recently teamed up with Parks and Facilities Superintendent Greg Hulke to expand the City's annual tree planting program, and I'm proud to share the City has doubled the number of trees to be planted this year," said Mikala.

Looking ahead? Mikala will continue to support the Sustainability Commission's projects and collaborate with staff on any sustainability aspects of their department initiatives.



MIKALA LARSON
SUSTAINABILITY
ANALYST

STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES & PRIORITIES

CORE VALUES

COLLABORATION



DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION



INNOVATION



STEWARDSHIP



DEFINED GOALS

CITY OF CHOICE



HIGH PERFORMING,
FINANCIALLY STABLE
GOVERNMENT

SAFE AND HEALTHY
COMMUNITY



PROMOTIONS - CONGRATULATIONS!

Marissa Gil – Assistant Technical Supervisor – Hemmens

Andres Gutierrez – Utility Maintenance Technician (Sewer) – Water

Heather Lencioni – Police Lieutenant – Police

Robert Copland – Police Sergeant – Police

Shaun Schroeder – Police Sergeant – Police

Julia Young – Water Service Person – Water

Sonia Gasca – Citizen Advocate II – Neighborhood Services (311)

Kathleen Chantrey – Citizen Advocate II – Neighborhood Services (311)

Mitch Whalen – Fire Captain – Fire

Patrick Rasmussen – Fire Lieutenant/Paramedic – Fire

Michael Oine – Division Chief of Emergency Management and EMS – Fire

Jose Vargas – Building Maintenance Worker – Building Maintenance

Diana Gonzalez – Citizen Advocate – Finance

Eutiminio Bello – Utilities Superintendent – Water

Ryan Unruh – Crew Leader (Traffic) – Public Works

Jerry Merritt – Crew Leader (Streets) – Public Works

JoBeth Robison – Communications Supervisor – Police

NEW EMPLOYEES - WELCOME!

Jordan Orchard – Engineering Inspector – Engineering

Joseph Velna – Engineering Inspector – Engineering

Leslie McCracken – Bilingual Permit Technician – Community Development
Mayra Soto-Cardenas – Bilingual Permit Technician – Community Development
Allyson Villa – Bilingual Permit Technician – Community Development
Steven Taft – Building Inspector (Electrical) – Community Development
Lauren Mack – Licensed Environ Health Practitioner in Training – Neighborhood Services (Public Health)
David Wexler – 911 Telecommunicator – Police
Kevin Bitnas – Police Officer – Police
Fernando Camacho Jr – Police Officer – Police
Marie Chew – Police Officer – Police
Gabrielle Wilcheski – Police Officer – Police
Michael Rothecker – Assistant Fire Chief – Fire
Michael Anderson – Firefighter – Fire
Steven Gutierrez – Firefighter – Fire
Homer Homa – Firefighter – Fire
Anthony Malmgren – Firefighter – Fire
Madison Kosyla – Water Operator – Water
Scott Jenkins – Recreation Software Specialist – Parks and Recreation

**This issue includes promotions and new employees since December 17, 2021.*

RECOGNITIONS

To: Steve Whalen

From: Laura Zorn

Laura wants to say "Thank you" for the amazing job the staff that take care of the plants around the train tracks on Rt. 31 and around the Centre of Elgin. She is in love with all the plants/flowers and wants to let staff know that "it makes her heart so happy to see all the beautiful flowers".

To: Cherie Aschenbrenner

From: Barb Kohley (Anderson Humane)

My thanks to Cherie for helping negotiate taking the 2 sick cats out of CJ's home this afternoon. They will be looked at by our Vet and we will communicate the results to CJ.

Cherie went above and beyond (she isn't even South Elgin-but Elgin proper!)

Her love of animals and her vast experience with seniors really helped a person in need today!

Anderson Humane's flexibility to handle an emergency on top of all the animals we care for is remarkable. It takes a Village....

To: Ed Schmidt, Jerry Merritt

From: Linda Hooker

Resident came to the COE today to give a big thank you for such quick response time with the repairs to her mailbox from snow plow damage this season. Thank you!

To: Kathleen Chantrey

From: Deanna Johnson

Thank you so much! I really appreciate the updates. We are longtime Elgin residents (my husband since 1968 and me since 1991) and we love The City of Elgin. You represent our city well. Have a wonderful day. And again, thank you for the communication.

To: All involved in ROW cleanup: Public Works, Elgin Allies, Parks

From: Gene Waugh

I drove through McClean and Big Timber this morning (Mon Mar 21) and just wanted to tell you how tickled I was to see the effort put into collecting trash along the south side of Big Timber and the railroad tracks.

People and trash is one of my pet peeves; I pick up a lot in the neighborhood while taking walks (I am retired, so have time). We live on south side of Adams St, so our lot backs up to US 20. (I know that this IS NOT the city's responsibility!) But this afternoon my wife and I climbed over our back fence and filled five large, really stuffed, trash bags from along our lot line. I just hate to look out our upstairs bedroom window and see all that trash!

Anyway, again, Thanks for cleaning up today---Please pass this on to the appropriate department

To: Joe Schroeder; David Smith

From: William Alexander

Called to thank the street sweeper, said they did a wonderful job, commend how fast it was he appreciates it.

To: All City employees

From: Alejandra Pastrano

Thank you for the great job you all do!

I don't have any questions, just wanted to thank you all who work at the City of Elgin you do an

absolutely great job! From keeping our roads clean on snow days to addressing concerns and/or complaints in order to keep our beautiful City of Elgin up and running. You are the best!!"

To: Jerry Merritt

From: David Wynn

Called to say "THANK YOU" to the individual who came out to fix his mailbox. He said they did a really good job.

To: Forestry Division

From: Kathleen Wimpelberg

"Wow! I just called about a few hours ago ! Great job by the Forestry Crew. Thank you so much - great service.

To: Cherie Aschenbrenner

From: Susan McGuffin

THANK YOU. I got ahold of someone and they were amazing!!! Sounds like they even have an assistance program to help me long term!!! Thank you.

To: Jennie Phillips, David Koski, Aaron Neal

From: Cherie Aschenbrenner

Thank you Jennie, Dave and Aaron for speaking today on behalf of the City. I was overwhelmed with compliments from the seniors afterwards and one senior gentlemen said, "I always learn something at every event. It was so informative today".

Your information was perfect and they loved the handouts. So thank you all, again, for making this event today so successful. Elgin should be proud!!

To: Cherie Aschenbrenner

From: Sue Varava

Cherie, it seems like forever since I have talked with you. But every month when I receive the reminder of the Memory Cafe meeting at Village Squire, I am reminded of how much support you offered to me in my struggles with my mom's (Dee Sodt) continuing life journey. I can't thank you enough for your helpful suggestions and problem- solving advise.

At this time, we have still not ventured to take at my mom outside the walls of Silver Glen Memory Care, but maybe I will build up enough confidence to attend with her in the future.

Each day is so different in her memory awareness and medicine induced side effects. The good days are fun and more frequent but we can't be sure when a sad one will present.

I wanted to reach out so you knew how much your connection means to me and others even if you don't hear from us as often. We are out here reading your messages and keeping hopeful that what you offer will be available when we have the courage to attempt a Memory Cafe opportunity. Thanks for all you do.

To: Cherie Aschenbrenner

From: Sarah Ebner

Thank you for the information. You are such a valuable help to the senior community.

To: Cherie Aschenbrenner

From: Joan Felski

You are great at what you do. A real plus+ to us Seniors. Thank you! Joan & Chuck

To: Public Works

From: Jim Jocius

Please thank your super snow plow driver for doing a terrific job on Snow Route Hiawatha Drive Wednesday afternoon. The Public Works driver did not blast street snow & salt over our driveway and sidewalk. He made slow speed passes which dropped the loads at the curb, saving me from shoveling hundreds of pounds of extra heavy snow and salt sludge off our driveway. Our snow thrower cannot handle that type and me being 81 years old, I appreciate his customer friendly slow, final push-backs. I will remember his extra effort for a long time to come.

To: David Smith

From: Paul Kasman

Resident called to say thank you. He said a driver came back after a snow removal request and the street is much much better.

To: Ed Schmidt, Saul Cruz, Caleb Dodge

From: Roger Stettner

Thank you Ed for making sure that our street got plowed curb to curb.

To: Public Works

From: Tim Baran

Thank you to the City and contractors for plowing the snow. Our cul-de-sac was cleared this evening and snow was removed from the front of every driveway. Thank you.

To: Public Works
From: Jerry Chlopek

Your trucks are doing a great job. This will be the last time I will email you for my wife. THANK YOU TO ALL.

To: Fleet Division
From: Kenneth Jowaski

Please give a shout out to the COE Fleet Dept! Their efforts to keep the plow equipment up and running is second to none. Thanks for your hard work!

To: Public Works
From: Patricia Garrity

Just want to say a huge thank you to the 2 gentlemen that plowed Coventry Court. We have 2 families at the end of the court who really need to be able to get out of their house at anytime. They saw me plowing the snow to the center of the court and made sure they didn't plow in the driveways and got all the snow in the center. Please tell them thanks so much!!! Very professional.

To: Laura Vargas
From: Walter Beaudette

Mr. Beaudette called to specifically say thank you for assisting him with this request. He is very appreciative and wanted you to know how much he appreciates you. Well done, Laura!

To: Jennie Phillips
From: Nina Jonsson

Thank you so very much for your quick response! I have shared the inspector's contact info with my neighbors (via our Highland Woods neighborhood fb page), so hopefully they will reach out to Jarod directly. Truly appreciate your help!

To: Ed Schmidt
From: Karen Huber

A City of Elgin plow came this morning and cleared the snow at the end of my driveway. We cleaned

the curb and are ready to go for the next snow. Thank you again for immediately addressing my concern.

To: Lauren Gabler
From: Greg Slaughter

Thank you for the quick response [to my snow cleanup request]. Job well done.

To: Public Works
From: Cindy Walden

Quick note to say thank you to the snow crew. Compared to the several surrounding municipalities, our snow removal is top notch.

To: Jennie Phillips, Ed Schdmidt
From: Bill Vincent

Thanks for the response. I did speak with the plow driver from the City yesterday when he was salting this unplowed area. He was very cordial and said he would make sure the assigned driver plowed this portion of the city street in the future. Just wanted to thank you for responding so quickly.

To: Sonia Gasca
From: Joe Scaccia

Thank you for your prompt attention to his case and concerns regarding snow cleanup. Your professionalism was appreciated.

To: Gustavo Hernandez and Liz Price
From: Katie Thrun

A big thank you to Gustavo Hernandez and Liz Price who both ended their holiday vacations early to help out with Snow Event 3 on 1/2/2022. Their teamwork, dedication and commitment to not only Public Works but the Elgin community did not go unnoticed.

To: Aaron Cosentino and Joseph Wozny
From: Darin, former resident

I moved to South Elgin in May, so I haven't been on the Elgin bike "network" as much as I used to be, but I rolled through my old neighborhood this past week while I was working and noticed how solid the toter compliance is regarding placement in the bike lanes. Raymond Street appears to be holding solid

with regards to compliance with this as well.

So please accept my thanks for the follow through that led to better informed residents. They really seem to have bought in to the idea that they shouldn't block the bike lanes, and that's in large part to your action. The compliment is based on your approach. Nicely done.

To: B/C Dan Wagner, Lt. John Harris, FF Tom Enzenbacher, FF Mark Schulz, Lt. Wayne Smith, FF Ed Hanson, FF Mark Schneider, Lt. John Harris, FF Tom Enzenbacher, FF Mark Schulz, Lt. Dan Lamka, FF Jeff Pagels
From: Kane County Coronor Rob Russell

Dear Chief Cagann-

I want to personally point out how professional your fire personnel were at a death we were called out to in Elgin. The residence was extremely difficult to navigate through, due to an insurmountable amount of hoarding that had occurred there. The amount of debris was immense and covered the entire first floor. Normal recovery methods would have been extremely difficult and would have subjected my personnel to many seen and unseen biohazards the residence contained. After consultation with Battalion Chief Wagner, it was best decided that the safest, most humane method of recovery was to utilize the second story window of the residence. After deliberate entry was made via the second story window, with the least amount of damage possible, a successful recovery was made and the decedent was also respected in the process. I cannot thank you and your personnel enough for the amount of care and kindness that was shown during this incident. Please extend my sincere thanks.

To: 311, Aaron Neal, Caleb Dodge

From: Jim Mitrenga

After being advised him of possible solution sets to his issue with led light, Jim was amazed at the professionalism of this organization from the 311 team down to the department response. He was blown away and stated that he has only called into 311 a handful of times and each time he is pleased with being a resident of Elgin.

SHARE YOUR STORY

April is Autism Acceptance Month and in support, Elgin police officers have been sporting their Autism Acceptance Month patches on their uniforms. Officer Robbie Soberano designed this year's patch with inspiration from his son, Benjamin, who is on the Autism Spectrum and whose determination and hard work humbles him daily. The photo of Officer Soberano was shared on the Elgin Police Department's Facebook page along with and his description of what the patch means to him. It received hundreds of likes, and dozens of shares and comments. It even resulted in a heartwarming article by the [Daily Herald](#).

We want to see and share your photos. They may be used on the City's social media channels, website and in other hiring and promotional materials. [Send us photos from your workday and we can help share your story.](#)



COMMUNITY PARTNERS



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ELGIN, Illinois